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512 rejoice, for they know that Kuma, the goddess creator of all things,
519 is content with them and is sending them a greeting in token thereof.
796 On the wings of the wind comes the roar of the araguatos.

But life starts in the east and ends in the west. The day is done and the night comes on. The Yaruros turn to face the east to watch
821 the beginning of star travel and also the fiery appearance of the
776 moon and its transformation to a chaste white. The sands glisten and above flash "falling stars", but the Yaruros say that these are messengers of Kuma doing their errands.

512 Then the women roll cigars, light them, and pass them to their men.
276 Everyone smokes and there is great contentment. There is reluctance
462 to stand up, so if a woman has to fetch some object, say a firebrand,
[576] she will crawl on all fours, looking not unlike some large but indescribably graceful ape.

When several stars of the big dipper have appeared the women
512 rise in a body and walk into the darkness west of the camp. They
462 disappear from sight and hearing. What mysteries they perform they only know. The men are left alone and they talk about heaven. The children play merrily.

The women return and quietly take their places, ready to prepare more cigars. It is good to lie naked on the sand looking at the sky,
060 listening to nature's symphony. With the same persistent effortless rhythm of the pulse beat the world outside of the individual is felt. There is the merry laughter of the children and the soft, deep, contented gurgle of the women; the soft voice of the shaman painting religious pictures, explaining existence; the murmur of the wind as a background to the calls of night birds, and the blowing of toninos, the splash of frolicsome fishes, the intermittent howl of the monkeys, the bark of the wolf, the roar of the jaguar; and the warmth of a full stomach.

512 A figure may detach itself from the camp shadows and disappear
796 in the darkness of the west. Several young men may afterwards take the same path—to join the shaman in his preparations for communion with the gods. They leave behind them a feeling of expectation but nothing is said. Someone has put up a bare pole where the sand is hard packed.

796 The shaman returns and goes to sit in front of the pole facing the
791 east. He sits quietly and alone in deep reverie. Later he may ask for a cigar. His wife will supply him with one.

After a period of contemplation he may begin to sing and dance. His people will join him. The music will become more and more animated, the singing and dancing will be done with increasing abandon. The stars and the moon will go their ways to rest in the west.
512 It is only when the sun peeps over the eastern horizon that they will

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123 resentful of my presence. Acting on a sudden impulse, I asked one of the men sitting near me for a gourd rattle. There followed a discussion among the men, and finally they decided to give me one. Without much heart, and no will, I began to sing a song of the Bororos of Brazil, accompanying myself with the rattle. It was the song of another tribe, and I sang it badly; but my unwilling hosts were listening, recognizing the musical pattern as being akin to theirs. I sang another when I had finished the first, and then still another, not failing to notice at the same time that they were listening carefully, and passing comments to one another. When my repertoire was exhausted, I placed the rattle on the sands and smoked in silence. Nothing was said for some time. Then a hand reached for the rattle and a voice said in Spanish:

"Ahora canto yo." (Now I will sing.)

533 The speaker sat on the sands, facing east. He began a song, the melody of which sounded as wild as the medley brought to us by the wind. His people joined us and, sitting behind him in a semicircle, took up the chorus at the end of every stanza. The song was first a murmur and then a shout, but maintained its steady rhythm. When the moon brightened the tropical night with its colorless light, sharpening the many shadows and turning the waving palm leaves into quivering ribbons of silver, the Yaruros forgot all about the stranger

535 in their midst. As though on a prearranged signal, they arose and began to dance, as they sang, around a pole. Women danced as well as men, and the children joined in too. They danced all night, and it was not until the sun rose above the hills of Guiana that they stopped to seek an hour or two of sleep before setting off on the daily task of hunting their dinner.

123 During the day I noticed that their fear of me had disappeared, but

● 791 it was not until that evening that I discovered the reason for the change. I gathered a confused tale that the one who had led the singing was a shaman. My singing and gourd rattling had indicated to him that I was a shaman also, since only the shamans use the rattle among the Yaruros. Furthermore, he had asked the Yaruro gods who I was, and the gods, as well as the spirits of the dead Yaruros living with the mother goddess Kuma, had instructed him to tell these primitive hunters that I was different from the "Racionales" (name applied to the "civilized" llaneros) and, as evidenced by my singing, that I intended no harm to them; in short, that I was a Pumeh, one of Kuma's people, and lived very close to her land.

772 From the recital of the night's performance I gathered that the Yaruro's universe is presided over by a female being called Kuma, who lives in the west and who waits for the living Yaruros to return to her land; that in some fashion the water snake and the jaguar are

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considered to be their ancestorial relatives; that once upon a time the Yaruros were very many and now very few; that the Yaruros had been visited with great calamities the preceding year, and many of their people had died through sickness and other destructive forces.

Also, I learned that, though I could gather inklings of a rich spiritual culture and a good cross section of the material phases from this band, I had to go farther down river to meet the spiritual leaders of the remnants of this race if I wanted to reach the heart of the Yaruros' religion, cosmology, mythology, and ethics.

In all of the primitive groups with which I have come in contact, certain individuals are recognized as the leaders and authorities, especially on such matters as religion and social organization. The younger people hesitate and often refuse to discuss such matters altogether, but age alone is not enough to qualify an individual as the mouthpiece of the group. The Yaruros were no exception. As soon as they grasped that I wanted to know a great deal about their history and culture they urged me to talk to "Landaeta", their leader and great "musico" or shaman. He, with his family, was hunting on the lower Capanaparo. They offered to guide me to him. Accordingly, we journeyed downstream by moonlight to avoid the heat of the day, and as I subsequently discovered, to avoid meeting with crocodile hunters.

About noon the next day we sighted several empty canoes drawn up on the bank, and knew that there must be more Yaruros nearby. We landed on the sandy beach and awaited their return. They came early in the afternoon, the men carrying turtles and crocodiles slung on poles, the women with baskets filled with changuango, leaning forward as they walked, looking not unlike grotesque apes under their heavy loads; and also, little children carrying their share of food, straggling behind. Upon seeing me they were frightened, but did not run away.

My Yaruro paddlers acted the part of mediators perfectly, for soon afterwards we were all embarked and moving downstream to join the main body of Landaeta's band which, I was told, was encamped several miles downstream. Their good humor almost amounted to gaiety. The three canoes moved steadily down the river, the men paddling hard, and the women sitting quietly and casting shy inquisitive glances in my direction.

We found Landaeta and his people on a large exposed wind-swept beach. There was the white sand, the strong wind blowing from the east raising it into dust clouds, and the intense glare from river and sand; a few water jars, a few baskets, several refuse heaps with buzzards feeding at them, canoes drawn up on the beach, and some

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captive turtles; and a few human beings were sitting or lying in the midst of all this, and exposed to all of the elements.

Among primitive people news travels rapidly. Landaeta, in this case, received me with the air of one who was expecting a visitor and it turned out that my reputation had preceded me. Not only did he know that I was in the country, but also why I was there. He was expecting me in order to teach me his ways and the ways of his people, and to learn my ways and the ways of my people. To him I was a shaman, no different than himself, who knew their mother goddess intimately and who was perhaps related to the gods themselves. He asked me for pictures of Kuma and Kuma's land. I soon discovered that he was under the illusion that in some way I was on intimate terms with the Yaruro's god.

A little to one side a branch was planted in the sand, and lying in its thin shade a girl was waiting to die. She was burning with fever and delirious. Her people were hovering over her, without being able to alleviate her sufferings or to help her to the end of life. Her malady was a new one to them, passed on by the newcomers to their world, and therefore they had no remedy for it.

The sick girl was Landaeta's daughter and as one physician to another, he came to me requesting that I save his daughter from death. Being neither physician, magician, nor priest, I responded to his plea the best way I could. Lest I be drawn into a situation of attempting to cure a sick person without adequate knowledge of the sickness or its remedy, I moved off the same day to seek other Yaruros; but only after Landaeta had promised that he would commence his journey in the cool of the evening and rejoin me several days later.

It has often been said that to accept the promise of a primitive Indian is to abandon all thought of its being remembered. Perhaps it would seem that I put too much faith and trust in my friends in sitting down to wait for them to join me. But a promise made and accepted without coercion is to the Indian one that has to be kept; and, as in many other cases of my experience with primitive people, this one was kept.

That the feeling of suspicion had not disappeared completely was proven by the attitude of another hunting group which I visited. I went alone among them, and unarmed. On my arrival in a canoe, carrying no equipment, they sullenly warned me to keep away from them and their camp. However, good will is never unproductive, and when they saw that I merely squatted on the sands, shared my tobacco with them, said nothing, and then cheerfully paddled away, their hearts must have melted, for several days later they too had joined my band of friends, later becoming among those most deeply attached to me.

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123 342 We camped on a large wind-swept beach on the Capanaparo and waited there for Landaeta. While waiting I made visits about the country, seeking out Yaruros wherever I could find them. In one nearby group I noticed that unlike most of the Yaruros, these had built permanent shelters, constructed similarly to the houses of the ranchers. However, there was one significant difference. With true Indian logic, they had left the walls open at the bottom, so that the wind could sweep through the house and keep it cool and free from insects.

791 One morning we embarked to visit a group led by Pablo Reyes, being on an island in the Orinoco, at the mouth of the Capanaparo. Pablo Reyes had been described to us as a very old and very wise man. Borrowing a small dugout, we set out to visit him, traveling mostly by night. On our way we saw and heard a great deal of [311] animal and bird life, for the lower part of the river was less hunted by the Yaruros than the upper part. On the banks we saw numerous tracks of the cats, we saw many capibaros or "chiguires" and we were often serenaded by the roar of the howlers.

133 Our entrance into the Orinoco was dramatic. We were catapulted out of the swift waters of the mouth of the Capanaparo and staggered about among the powerful cross currents and eddies at the confluence of the two rivers. The east wind made travel no easier, as it was blowing a gale. On the far side of the Orinoco were the hills of Guiana, rough and jagged, with gnarled vegetation, and dark patches of jungle growth. There were several islands of odd shape, and one of them, about halfway across the Orinoco, was the Linda Bara, to which we made our way.

177 Encamped on this island we found Pablo Reyes' band and a number of "Racionales," that is, "civilized," Venezuelans of the llanos, who during the dry season take to living like the Indians, except that they clutter their shelters with civilized equipment. The result is that their houses are infested with parasites of all kinds. However, they too live upon crocodiles, turtles, and the eggs of the latter.

311 237 This portion of the Orinoco is, in late March and early April, the gathering ground of both Indians and Racionales. The region teems with turtles. By common agreement, stretches of the beaches where the turtles are known to gather in large numbers are not hunted until April, at which time the people dig up thousands and thousands of newly laid eggs out of which they make an oil for export. The [436] center for this commerce is the little settlement of La Urbana, originally a Capuchin mission established about 1750.

791 Like Landaeta, Pablo Reyes had also learned of my coming, and was ready for me. He too is a shaman, and delights in speaking to a sympathetic listener about religious themes, of his conception of

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

the universe, his understanding of life and death, of the history of his people and their future, of morality, and of justice. Likewise he was anxious to hear what message I had to bring from my people in respect to these things. So, sitting under the shelter of some branches, we talked. As we talked we both worked. Pablo Reyes kept his hands occupied making string, fixing bows and arrows, and I, when not busy writing, pretended to carve little figures out of wood. The children played about us and Pablo's three wives kept shyly in the background, though listening carefully to what we said and often throwing inquisitive glances in our direction.

Profiting by our proximity to Guiana, I decided to visit Urbana where I could buy some goods for my friends and at the same time gather information about archeology. The wind blew so hard it proved necessary to drag the canoe along the shore of the island until we found the best place for a crossing. The sand was raised in clouds and our bodies were peppered with it so that we were forced to cover up closely. It finally proved impossible to continue and we were forced to stop and camp in the open with our backs to the wind and no shelter except what we could get from our hammocks. But holding them up was as much a hardship as to be bombarded by sand. We made one attempt to cross the Orinoco in the afternoon but we were forced to give it up. Finally, late in the afternoon, putting our trust in "God and the Virgin," as the Venezuelan canoemen say, we launched the canoe and reached La Urbana about midnight. Our stay there was necessarily short and we hastened back to Linda Bara the following day, but I gathered enough from the examination of collections at the Salesian Mission to determine that the archeology on that side of the Orinoco is quite different from that of the llanos.

At sunset as we were approaching the island we saw an army of bats in flight. The bats were coming as a cloud out of a Guiana hill in the far distance, and flew directly over us, and across to the other shore of the river, disappearing into the forest. We watched this vast army for about 15 minutes and then continued on our way, not because we had seen the last of the bats, but because time was short. I was told by my guide that this daily flight of the bats from the hills of Guiana across the Orinoco generally lasts two hours. How many thousands of them live in this cave and fly daily to forage for food in the forest is a matter of conjecture. The bat, so plentiful in this region, seems to have inspired the ancient potters of the llanos to use the head as a motif of decoration.

When we reached Pablo Reyes the next day we found there several other Yaruro families, relatives of Pablo, encamped with him. We talked some more, then departed several days later in order to return to Landaeta, who proved to be my best informant.

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181 up and down the rivers in their canoes, or lying on the sand, feasting on crocodile or turtle. He would see stolid fixed faces, uncommunicative, affrighted. But if this traveler were to stay he would discover that from sundown to sunrise the Yaruro lives in an intensive romantic world which he cannot and rarely would care to share with anyone else.

576 787 821 We returned from the trip to La Urbana at sundown when bars of yellow, blue, and white light streaked the western sky. The Yaruros were sitting on the sands watching this phenomenon with a certain rapture. They sat quietly and in silence facing the west until the lights had faded and merged into a subdued golden glow. Then Landaeta came and greeted me affectionately. He spoke of what we had just seen in the western sky, explaining that it represented a greeting from the mother goddess Kuma, to her children the Yaruros and to me. The other men came also, and the women too put their arms about me, but the latter kept their faces averted as is proper in Yaruro culture. We settled ourselves on the sands. Small fires were burning with remnants of turtles and crocodiles broiling over them. The sands glistened in the moonlight that soon came upon us. Araguato monkeys roared in the distance. An occasional bird sang. Insects hummed. Toninos frolicking in the water came up to blow lustily. And Landaeta explained that these animals were also children of Kuma and that everyone in Kuma's world was glad that I had returned.

553 123 We smoked and Landaeta talked, recounting what his gods had told him about me; that now I was one of their family, and he affectionately called me "adjimai oteh" (elder brother), which became the standard form of address by all of his people. In return I was asked to call them little brother and little sister.

790 791 533 At a point Landaeta rose and walked away into the darkness. His son and nephew followed him soon afterwards. He returned after an absence of half and hour, wearing his shaman's ceremonial cap and breechclout. He went to sit on the clean white sands to the east of the camp, where he remained still and quiet for a long time. His wife went to him with a lighted cigarette. He smoked this in silence and alone. Finally he made a sign and his son and nephew rose immediately to plant a pole a few feet in front of him, and then retired again into the darkness. After some time Landaeta rose, and facing the east in front of the pole, continued to smoke in silence. It seemed a long time before he began to sing, softly and hesitantly, which time was measured by the rising of the stars. After he had finished two songs his wife approached him again, thrusting into the ground, close to the pole, a stick from which hung a small basket. Landaeta continued standing, facing the east and singing, pausing briefly between

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songs. His nephew went to stand behind him; his son went forward to stand at the left shoulder of his cousin. These two boys joined in the singing, repeating Landaeta's song stanza after stanza. A few women, led by Landaeta's wife and daughter, went to stand at his right side, and joined the boys in answering the songs of the shaman. They stood there in front of the pole singing until the Southern Cross hung high in the sky. Then Landaeta's wife took a gourd rattle from the basket and gave it to her husband, who immediately began to shake it, its liquid tone blending harmoniously with the voices. The singers became more animated when they heard the rattle, and soon they began to dance, jerking the body forward and backward, rhythmically and in unison. At times Landaeta would shake his rattle violently and his voice would betray his deep excitement. His wife from time to time would give a lighted cigarette to him, holding it to his mouth until it was consumed. At midnight the shaking of the rattle became more frequent and more violent, and finally, in the middle of one song, everyone began to move around the pole. The women put their right hands on the shoulder of the one ahead, and soon were running and stamping the right foot as they did so. The men formed an inner circle, dancing one behind the other. At the end of each song they paused for a moment lined up in their original positions. As the night wore on, both singing and dancing became more and more animated until the shaman appeared to be in a frenzy. His voice rose in pitch, his rhythm was faster, and more strongly accentuated, and all sang with greater feeling. The shaman danced in jerky movements, bending and twisting his body, half spinning about, first one way then the other, until he seemed to be quivering all over. The dance around the pole became almost a mad run, made more difficult by the soft sands and the complex movements of the body. The men would leap high and as the right foot was stamped in unison, a resonant beat was produced that seemed to blend with the pulsating roar of the howlers brought to us by the wind, and marked off by the rich rattling of the gourd and the choral singing. In the morning hours the wind rose again, blew more violently, and the roar of the monkeys became stronger, and the Yaruros sang passionately. It was then, when the morning star was already high, and dawn lighted the eastern horizon. that they stopped.

The sun awoke me, and though I had slept barely two hours I felt quite refreshed. I sat up to look about me. There was the vast stretch of sand, the fringe of jungle, and the sparkling river. My Yaruros were sleeping half buried in the sand, behind basketry to shelter themselves from the wind. The vultures were already at the piles of refuse, feasting on crocodiles and turtles. Soon the sun awoke my friends, and they too sat up to gaze quietly at the western sky where they believe their gods live.

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821 formations held a deep fascination for them. I understood but little of it, for their Spanish was too broken, and I was unfamiliar with Yaruro. So we spent the evening in quiet conversation and amity, conscious of the soft voices of the women in the background, children, laughter, and always the throbbing roar of the distant bands of 825 howlers which was brought to us by the wind. To the Yaruros the howlers were formerly men.

Landaeta relayed to me questions uppermost in his wife's mind. Did I have a wife in my own country? Did I have any children? Why had they not come with me? Once in Brazil I had been asked similar questions by another naked primitive fold, and I had answered truthfully that I had neither wife nor children. I remember their confusion and amazement. In their eyes I was a great man, and therefore I should have had many wives and many children. It is certain that they really never believed or understood my answer. So, in this case, not wanting to make extensive explanations about our civilization, which not only does not insist that men and women marry, but even makes it very difficult for them to do so, I lied, answering that I was married and had one son. Of course I had to describe both wife and boy to the inquisitive women. They wanted to know if her skin was the same color as mine, and her hair as white as mine, and what did she wear on her body? Also, they made me 784 promise that some day I would bring my wife and boy to them, so that the women who, because of social taboos, could not converse directly with me, would be able to do so with my wife.

821 As we talked of these things, falling stars played in the heavens, "messengers of Kuma" according to the Yaruros, the big dipper swung higher, and the southern crosses began their journeys. For a while the wind died down, and the monkeys were heard no more. Always responsive to the world in which they live, the Yaruros became silent and still. And then, as the moon rose above the hills of Guiana, Landaeta disappeared in the darkness to return later and begin his singing.

796 Unlike our own religious ceremonies, there was no attempt at creating artificial seriousness. The children played about noisily under 781 the very nose of the shaman without reproof, and the adults talked happily. The imminent communion with the gods was an event of festive proportions and no restraints were put on normal and natural behavior before joyous events.

533 There was no dancing on this night, in deference to me, for I could not participate in it, but we sat in a semicircle and sang after the shaman.

787 Itciai arrived and I was helped to sit close to the shaman. Apparently Itciai was talking about me, referred to as "the Man." I lighted 791 a cigarette and held it to the shaman's mouth. Without interrup-

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787 tion of the song it was smoked in the shamanistic manner, or rather
• 791 spirit style, and Itciai began to explain who I was. He said that he knew me well, that I had visited Kuma's land many times, that I was a shaman; that my family was well, that my wife was waiting for me, and that my son was so anxious he began to fear that I was dead. He said that there was something big being saved fo. me in my country. I was a good man, and a man like the Yaruros; that he was glad I liked the Yaruros so much, and that he was glad I was living with them. I had nothing to fear, since on my death I would go to Kuma land. Itciai was saving for me a beautiful large horse to ride in the land of the gods.

During this long discourse about me from Itciai, which lasted about one hour and which was translated to me only in fragmentary fashion, the shaman often, at the beginning of a new thought, would shake the rattle violently before my face, and continue the same frenzied tone and shaking throughout. The people sang lustily, with feeling likewise, a great compliment to me.

[185] Itciai[1] had something to say about the Yaruros in general, namely, that they were doomed to die, but that a better world and life awaits them with Kuma. They will have houses and cattle, clothing, tobacco, and all food; they will be born again there, young and strong. This world will come to an end because the Yaruros are being killed off.

Later Hatchawa[1] came. I had a cigarette ready for him. He appreciated it and asked the shaman why I didn't drink of the shaman's drink. He urged me to drink it. I was a Yaruro. He also acknowledged my acquaintance in my own country and in Kuma's, and expressed deep affection for me. He brought good news of my family, saying to hurry back to my wife since she had been waiting for me with much love for a long time. He got another cigarette and I was embraced several times.

The next to come was the father of one of the Yaruro men, and as soon as I heard of it I offered a cigarette. It was properly acknowledged and the people were told by the spirit that indeed I knew a great deal, since I had cigarettes ready to greet the spirits. At about 3 o'clock in the morning came the god Puaná, expressly to greet me. He said that I lived in another land which he himself had made and that he was glad I had come to visit this land. He received three or four cigarettes. He described my land as being like that of Kuma, high and beautiful. He gave me further news of my family and said that he was keeping for me much cattle and many horses in the land of Kuma.

781 Puaná[1] was greeted with happy laughter and general approval, the reception as demonstrated by the quality of the frenzied singing.

1[Itciai and Puaná are creator gods; Hatchawa is the fire-giver ..... Analyst]

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781 Puaná stayed with us for about an hour and a half, talking most of the time about me.

And finally at about 5 o'clock Kuma herself came to visit me and, 787 like Hatchawa, urged me to drink of the shaman's drink. I had to 791 drink a gourd full of it, since it was held to my lips until I finished it. She gave me messages similar to the others. Finally other Yarures came, and the shaman eventually returned, being greeted with affection by all. We stopped when the sun rose and began another day of primitive life. We had danced and sung almost continuously for 36 hours.

This was my reception among the Yaruros after my return from La Urbana. We talked day and night about religion, and about 606 the world in which we lived. I learned that a mother-in-law and 582 son-in-law must never look upon each other and never talk to each 604 other, though they must be careful to do each other service; that a man must marry his first cousin, and that socially he is under obligation to his maternal uncle who later becomes his father-in-law. Under Landaeta's tutelage the material in this report was compiled. In a sense, therefore, this is his report.

124 One day I announced to Landaeta that I would have to leave in the 123 near future, giving as a reason that my wife and child needed me at home. Actually, there were other considerations; my physical condition was becoming worse, though the sores on my feet were a little better; and for the time being I had quietly exhausted the possibilities of obtaining fresh material from my friends. After all, we had been in contact with each other for six weeks, the major portion of it living communely and conversing with the shaman continuously day after day, sometimes even from sunrise to sunrise. My daily schedule consisted of rising at sunrise, drinking a little coffee sometimes brought to me by Landaeta, and immediately plunging into discussions of religious themes. This would last up to about 10 o'clock when Landaeta would withdraw and busy himself making string or carving gourds for several hours. During this period I would seek clarification of some points from whomsoever was present, or work on social organization, or on genealogy. In the early afternoon Landaeta would be back with new material, new ideas, having thought over what he had said, what I had said, and what still needed to be said. This would continue until sundown.

521 Then there was a short intermission for dinner, but soon afterwards I was hurried over to the eastern edge of the camp, where Landaeta and his people sat after dinner, and there we would sit while the women made cigars for us, talking about mythology, religion and general philosophical concepts. These discussions would last until 10 or 11 o'clock, and often much later, and not rarely shamanistic

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251 During the rainy season the seed of the chigua is gathered. It is crushed, toasted, and stored in small quantities in the same way as the changuango, provided, of course, that a spot is found high enough to keep it dry.

Social Organization and Social Customs

596 616 622 791 554 Economically the family hunting group is the basic unit, as has been shown in the previous chapter. In social matters, however, it is the moiety. Each family hunting group recognizes a headman and each moiety recognizes a chief who in all cases is the shaman. Both of these positions of authority are acquired only through personal merit. There is no inheritance of chieftainship or shamanism. If the nephew of a headman shows ability he may inherit his uncle's position, and theoretically this is the scheme. In natural practices we find that not only the Yaruros but perhaps a great many other primitive peoples are very realistic and are loath to give authority to an individual whose personality does not stand for leadership.

616 428 Every Yaruro is born in either the "Itciai" or "Puaná" moiety. Descent, with its social affinities, prerogatives, and obligations, being traced through the female line, the child belongs to its mother's moiety. Nothing is inherited from the father, who belongs to the other moiety, except obligations.

616 773 There is a legend among the Yaruros that two young men not finding any marriageable girls among their own people mated with the Jaguar and with the Snake. From these two unions are descended the two moieties. Since only among animals do brothers and sisters mate it has become a rule that two descendants of the Jaguar, "Itciai", cannot marry with each other; nor can two descendants of the Snake, "Puaná", marry with each other. They must seek a mate from the other group. Thus an "Itciai" must always marry a "Puaná", and vice versa. Cross-cousin marriage solves this problem.

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In this system, therefore, a man's children belong to his wife's moiety, from which he is socially excluded. His sister's children, on the other hand, are socially close to him since they too inherit moiety membership from their mother which is the same as his own. Deprived of his own children to carry on his traditions, a man looks to his sister's children to take their place. It is his nephews who will help him in hunting, who will come to his defence, who will take care of him in old age. As if in payment of such attention he gives them his daughters in marriage. Thus his sisters' sons become his sons-in-law.

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621 596 Yaruro society is built around the hunting group, which in numbers is never stable. The hunt and the gathering of food such as roots and fruits calls for a certain amount of cooperative effort, but

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

601 marriage she called also "nyowuh", are referred to as "keramai". The father-in-law calls his son-in-law "haiméma'", which means "the one my daughter married", and the son-in-law calls his father-in-law "huíteh". His mother-in-law, whom he never addresses directly, he [606] refers to as "kaikamúe". The girl refers to her father-in-law as "kuinté". Before marriage the boy would have called his uncle, the brother of his mother, "húidemái".

616 There do not seem to be any rites or ceremonies from which members of the opposite moiety are excluded. According to my informants, the Puaná clan moiety is preeminent over the Itciai moiety, therefore the person recognized as its head is considered to be the [578] chief of the Yaruros. There is no resentment, as far as I was able to learn, to this arrangement. Primarily, I suppose, because the biological descendants of an individual pass from one moiety to another and therefore share in its prerogatives. The Yaruros' social concepts in respect to moiety membership is best expressed by reciprocal duties, obligations, and prerogatives. Under the elementary local system the son-in-law is almost a guest among his wife's people with whom he goes to live. During the rainy season when more permanent shelters are built, according to my informants, they have more ceremonies, during one of which the unmarried boys of one moiety then sit in the house of the other moiety.

616 Although there is no exclusion of the members of the opposite
796 moiety in the ceremonies, if the shaman is of the Puaná moiety,
● 791 those that sit closest to him are members of his own moiety. But even in this case the other moiety is represented, and in fact indirectly serves him. His own wife sits at his right and it is she who assists him when her help is needed by handing to him the various pieces of his paraphernalia and tobacco. It is she, likewise, who prepares the various drinks. The rest of the members of her moiety, if they happen to be present, take their places following the members of the shaman's moiety.

604 When a man is undertaking a hunt or wishes to build a canoe he
476 calls on his nephews, that is, his sister's sons, for help, and they are obligated to be at his service. This obligation and service, which begins as soon as the boy begins to understand his position in the society, lasts a lifetime. When the uncle or uncles become too feeble to hunt for themselves it is these nephews who supply them with food and everything else they may need. This service may be interpreted as compensation to the uncles for their daughters who become the wives of these youths. But there was no indication that it was so considered by the Yaruro.

593 h. A man, therefore, does not have the services nor the social life of
604 his children, but has to look to his sister's womb for individuals to educate and to assist him.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

841 piece of cloth. (Among the peoples of the Xingu in Brazil she is made to wear her hair over her face, and she is kept from the sight of men.) Whether during this period special initiatory rites are performed I was not able to find out. This part of Yaruro culture is considered to be in the women's domain, and, being a man, I was kept from delving into it.

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MARRIAGE

527 The Yaruros are poor in social ceremonies. Anciently they may have practiced a great many of them but today social life is comparatively simple.

885 791 584 When a boy is ready to marry he may approach his father, or as a matter of fact, the father may approach the son. In any case he is sent to the shaman, who informs him that now he should be ready to assume the duties of a man, and proceeds to instruct him in the nature of those duties. He is told that he must love and cherish his wife; supply her plentifully with food, clothing, ornaments, and children; that he must never use harsh words toward her and that he must take care of her when she is sick; that he must never quarrel with her family, with whom he is expected to live; and of particular importance, that he must remember to take care of his father-in-law and mother-in-law. All of this is ordained by Kuma.

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584 585 791 The shaman will then approach the boy's uncle who has a marriageable daughter. No special ceremony seems to take place. The boy simply goes to live with the wife's family and assumes his duties of taking care of her as well as of his parents-in-law.

SICKNESS AND DEATH

751 757 Not much material was available on sickness. It must be remembered that the Yaruros have been in contact with European ideas for several centuries and that they understand the use of medicine for the cure of a specific illness.

753 756 Nevertheless, Kiberoh, the evil night spirit, is in some fashion associated with illness. If Kiberoh enters the body of a person, the latter will become ill. In such cases the only cure is the intercession of Kuma, who can be called upon to help by the shaman or musico, a term adapted from the Spanish to describe the singing shaman.

755 The sick person is laid on the ground with his head pointing to the east. At sundown the shaman will stand to the north of the sick person and will proceed to sing, accompanying himself with the rattle. The rest of the people, with the exception of any woman in her menstrual period, line up behind the shaman and sing and dance as they generally do during any of the shamanistic performances. If they indulge in any dancing, however, they do not go around a

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1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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a pole. In general, therefore, organized play for child or adult is hardly present.

WAR

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The Yaruros did not speak much of war. None of their legends make any reference to it except in one case which says that they were killed by the "Racionales" and that they retaliated.[6] The known historical sources say nothing except Father Gumilla's account, which makes reference to the pacification of the "Saruri."

MORAL ATTITUDES

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On the subject of conduct, the outlook on life and the organization of life values, we must distinguish between theory and practice. The former grows out of reflection and represents the intellectualization of the universe as seen without much reference to practical life. The second springs from the social and economic relationships and the fusing of individual ends and purposes into the purposes and ends of the group, whereas the first is not strictly controlled by custom and practical needs. Both exist among the [791] Yaruros. For the first we have to turn to the shaman, who in addition to being a religious leader, a savant, is also a moralist; and for the second we turn to the entire social group and need to watch it in its behavior.

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In reading over the early account of the aborigines of the region, among which we must presumably include Yaruros, we gather that their moral concepts were different from those of the Christians, but perhaps neither better nor worse in practice. It must be doubted, however, whether a number of practices attributed to the Yaruros are authentic. We read, for instance, that a number of the aborigines were patricides, and we are given a picture of the male children, on reaching adolescence, rising against the fathers [682] through lust for the mother. Patricide is an abhorrent crime and [683] the motive behind it is equally abhorrent. It is to be doubted whether patricide, or even lesser acts, such as beating the father, were ever practiced, except in sporadic cases such as may occur in [684] any society. It hardly seems possible that women were the cause of it when it is known, as it is known today, that mating and extramarital relationships are very strictly controlled by tradition and social training. Disregarding, therefore, such allusions to the moral life of the primitive peoples of the Orinoco, let us turn to our informants for an understanding of their present mode of life. The

[6] It would appear probable that the nomadic Yaruros were too weak to ever develop any warlike spirit.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

the first fact that holds our attention is that Yaruros are strongly ethically conscious. Every shamanistic performance is the means for the propagation of ethical teachings. The shaman, or as the Yaruros believe, the gods and their dead ancestors speaking through the shaman, admonish various individuals and lay down the law for proper conduct. They hold the threat also that misconduct will be displeasing to the mother goddess and as a result life with her will not be as pleasant as it would be if they followed her precepts in this world.

According to the Yaruro philosophy the world is, by its nature, good and it was created by Kuma as a good thing. If any evil exists it has been introduced by men, who have forgotten or come to disregard the laws laid down by the goddess. The world, if unsullied by men, is a perfect integration of the elements which function for the good of mankind. Unfortunately, at times men will disturb the structure. There is implied in this the existence of free will for mankind, since it can change or disturb what was created by Kuma. And if we have recourse to the legends, we find that perhaps the lower animals have free will also, although it is exercised by them much more rarely than by mankind.

Kuma appears also as the teacher of ethical laws. She told the people, told Hatchawa, and now tells the shamans: to live in peace with each other; to respect each other; to help each other; to live good lives; to take care of the parents-in-law and the children-in law. When the wife is ill or otherwise the mother-in-law should look after the needs of her son-in-law, although they do not speak to each other. The Yaruros will find recompense for such moral living after death. They are poor on this earth but will be rich like Kuma in the other world.

During my stay the women remained bashful, never speaking directly to me, and when I approached generally looking away. In the latter days they would laugh merrily as they fled. Their culture does not permit free social intercourse with men, but any request on my part relayed to them through their husbands or brothers was eagerly complied with, and with better than good humor.

All were helpful toward each other and there did not appear to be any dissension. Extreme care was taken that a person's rights and prerogatives were not infringed upon. The husband never seemed to request anything of his wife that did not lie in her province, and when strange demands were made to please me, entire freedom was given to the wife, or daughter, to do as it pleased her. Any misfortune, however slight or serious, that would produce some expression of anger among white people was met by the Yaruros with merry laughter. At night each family group lay on the sands

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 S519 Yaruro SS19

773 539 "Here, a son-in-law will take care of me now!" Then the Yaruros lived. The shaman had a nephew and a son. The nephew fell in love with his own sister and married—he was changed into a jaguar and she into a snake (?). If it had not been for this there would not have been any snakes and jaguars. Human beings should not marry their own sisters. It was ordered by Kuma. Animals are different.

Then one man found a tree with all the fruits on it. He did not tell the others. A white man appeared on horseback. Said he would come back in eight days. He came back in a boat. Scattered seeds everywhere. Thus he changed the country. Before it was all open savanna, but now forests and agricultural products grew.

India Rosa taught the women. God taught the men. God wanted to give the horse to the Yaruros, but they were afraid to mount, so he gave it to the Racionales instead.

KUMA

791 776 787 Presumably, Kuma is anthropomorphic. The only ones among the Yaruros who have any knowledge of this mythical being who is responsible for the world are the shamans. These individuals are loath to discuss what they see in their dreams, claiming that all they have to say about such things are said during their shamanistic performances. Besides, they claim that they do not remember what they see during their trances.

531 776 534 Nevertheless, on the rattles appear graphic representations of what Kuma is supposed to look like. In all cases, she seems to resemble a human being, standing with her arms extended upward in greeting to her people. Such figures are represented on the gourd rattles shown in plate 24 and figures 25, 26, 27. It was explained that the lines [30] appearing on the body of Kuma represent body painting and ornaments.

776 Of all the godheads or spirit forces of the Yaruros, Kuma is the most clear-cut. She is the creator of all things, and everything emanates from her. Her associates, Puaná, Itciai, and Hatchawa, function according to the laws of Kuma. Apparently they are not able to do anything without her consent, but occasionally she may be tricked. For instance, when Hatchawa decided to give fire to the people he threw a live fish into Kuma's fire. The wriggling of the fish scattered the coals, which the people seized and carried away.

Kuma is represented neither as an indulgent mother nor as an entirely benevolent creature in the myths. It is Hatchawa and Puaná who favor human beings. In fact, Kuma was opposed to peopling the earth with the human race. In spite of this there is no

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

SHAMANISM

791 157 Prerequisites to successful shamanism are temperament, knowledge, and experience. It has often been stressed by field investigators that in matters of religion, as in matters of artistic expression, only certain types of personalities can achieve any success. In the case of the Yaruros, by temperament is meant the inclination and desire to become a shaman which perhaps is reducible to other factors of personality, and a neurotic make-up which will permit the tyro to experience religious phenomena. Since there is no set test which has to be passed in order to be recognized as a shaman the pretender can try to achieve recognition by his people until his very death, but if he lacks the necessary temperament his attempt is hopeless. A 791 554 shaman must have knowledge above that of his fellow tribesmen. He must know and understand thoroughly the history of his people and their mythology, he must be able to solve and settle ethical points that may come up on the basis of ancestral customs, he must know all the medicinal practices of his people, and the magical also. In short, he must be a savant and a leader, a person who will be morally respected. This knowledge he can acquire only through experience. The Yaruros say that he must acquire it through personal teaching from the gods, not through an intermediary but in actuality he learns, of course, from the older shamans whose place he will take eventually and from the rest of his people. He is supposed to sing behind a shaman for many years before he can hold performances of his own.

791 533 He must, of course, learn all the tricks of the trade, though by this is not implied that the shaman is conscious of practicing any legerdemain among his people, but there is a certain ceremonial pattern which must be mastered by the neophyte and which can only be mastered by practice over a long period of time. For instance, in singing there are undoubtedly a number of standardized songs, but what is more important is to learn the musical pattern and the pattern of phraseology that must be fitted to the music. Since in a shamanistic performance the shaman does not sing set songs but spontaneous ones which he composes, or as the Yaruros claim the gods compose, and sing through the shaman, it is essential that he have many years of experience. The importance of this is fully understood when it is considered that the shaman must sing without any pause or hesitation some six thousand stanzas in the course of a night's performance, varying his tune and words again and again. It seems reasonable to suppose that there must be form given to such performances which can be mastered by one following closely the performances of a particular shaman.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

791 Shamanism is not socially inherited, but we may suspect that biologically it is in many cases. There is no attempt made to train any particular child for shamanism except that naturally those children who stand in a close relationship to the current shaman, such as sons, daughters, neices, and nephews, have a better chance to take up the profession than others, from their daily close association with the only person from whom they can learn. The performances are never secret and the children are permitted to be present until they are too tired and go to sleep. As they grow older they will tend to participate in the performances to a greater extent until they are able to stay up all night and take their proper place in adult society. Naturally among the children some will be attracted to singing and dancing with their elders more than others and these will tend to place themselves as close to the shaman as they can until they are of such age that they can be of actual assistance to him, when, if they make known their interest in becoming a shaman they may even become his understudies or disciples. One of them who shows the greatest interest and the greatest ability in singing, in remembering details and dancing, and a shamanistic temperament will always take his place behind the shaman and will take the lead in repeating the stanzas of the songs composed by him. Gradually he may attempt shamanistic performances of his own and gather followers as he is successful in obtaining religious experience. It is not uncommon to see a young man sitting on the sands facing east and to the east of the camp, at night, singing to himself and alone. Sometimes he has one or two others singing behind him, depending on his prestige. It is, of course, his great hope that some day he will be so successful as to win the approbation and confidence of the people, which will depend on his success with the gods themselves.

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791 787 157 The shaman must be a rather highly imaginative type. The only way he can impress his people with his knowledge and experience is to visit and see the abode of the gods and ancestors and to be able to describe these in words and in song and graphically with etchings on gourd rattles, so that unless the performer is of such a temperament that he can live through such experiences he can never become a shaman. Nor is there any opportunity for the one who will pretend having had such experiences, for naturally tribal tradition patterns are a constant check on him and his visions must necessarily conform to those had by other shamans; nor can he pretend to have visions of the particular type since he has the entire body of people as his severe critics and any inconsistency will be immediately seen to his discredit. Actually, I do not think there is ever any pretense. In the first place, we must remove the suggestion that there is material gain to flow from attaining the position of shaman. The shaman is an

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

791 ordinary citizen, receiving no compensation except the respect given
787 to an old man and a moral teacher. In the second place, shamanism
157 is a lifetime activity, and it would seem improbable that one would create such a life for himself which he would have to live until death if he were not suited to it. I saw cases of men who were striving to be shamans, some young and some old, with great regret admitting that they could not see the religious visions that others more successful had seen. In a primitive society such as that of the Yaruros, where life values are simple and evident to every one, where the intimacy existing between its members is thorough, there is very little incentive and very little opportunity for pretense.

791 Landaeta, my chief informant among the shamans, claimed that
787 he did not remember the specific events that he "dreams" when he
115 sang and that he could not sing during the day, nor could he remember the songs. He himself had to be told by the others what happened during a shamanistic performance. Thus he could tell me neither the words nor the tunes. I had to wait for another performance to try to take down both. Since the words were conversations between the shaman and the spirit forces, and thus varied at each performance, he was right. Yet there is a musical pattern and undoubtedly a word pattern also.

791 In the matter of making the sacred objects, he claimed that only
787 those who have "dreamed", have had religious experience, can make
531 them. Thus he himself was carving the rattles, and claimed that no
778 one else among his people could carve them. Some, like his nephew and son-in-law Juan Garcia, were learning.

791 At Landaeta's death probably the shaman will be either Brigido
787 Tovar, his son, or Juan Garcia, his nephew and son-in-law. Legend
554 favors the son, but Landaeta looks to Garcia. However, it is the son who sang behind the shaman in this case, but Garcia has had religious experiences already.

Landaeta himself claims that he sang behind his uncle for a long time without a moracca. Finally he had a "dream" and he was permitted to use a moracca. This religious experience is absolutely necessary to a future shaman.

791 That the shaman follows certain patterns of song, ritual, dream,
533 and revelation is quite certain, and it is these patterns that are trans-
787 mitted to the neophyte. Both dreams and revelations always have some bearing on current problems, and in fact attempt to solve these problems.

During a shamanistic performance the first songs describe the journey of the shaman's soul to the Land of Kuma. Upon reaching the desired land the shaman shakes his rattle violently and the songs

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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789 that follow describe this land as well as the gods and the spirits of the Yaruros.

It is to be noted that it is the ornaments worn by Kuma rather than the person of the gods which are described. We are told that she 776 wears golden necklaces, fine clothes, and belts and bands typical of 301 the ancient Yaruro woman's costume. She is represented vaguely as being in the form of a human being, who, on the other hand, is never described. Try as I might, I was not able to obtain any idea of her appearance. Hatchawa, as we know, is a little boy, but Itciai again lacks any definite form.

787 The shaman claims that during his ordinary life he has no idea of what he sees in the Land of Kuma, therefore these descriptions can only be gathered from due sources through the songs which he sings in shamanistic performances and through the figures which he etches out on the shamanistic gourd rattle. Several of these rattles are reproduced on plate 24 and figures 25, 26, 27.

The shaman does not claim special power to reveal anything, nor does he claim to have the power to cure. He is merely a vehicle or instrument through which the gods can visit the Yaruros by substituting themselves for the soul of the shaman. The only power that he claims is the ability to let his soul leave his body and travel to the Land of 787 Kuma. His soulless body subsequently becomes possessed by various 533 spirits who wish to communicate with their relatives on earth. As explained above, the shaman only sings the first songs hesitantly and in a poor voice which is in direct contrast to the violent and beautiful singing which the spirits exhibit when they are in possession of his body.

772 Kuma's Land is a perfect heaven for the Yaruro, who has endowed it with all the comforts and liberty denied to him in this world. In Kuma's Land food is abundant, the weather is ideal, there are no forests, no diseases, and most important of all, no civilized being to desolate them. We are confronted here with the creation on the part of the Yaruro of a superlative heaven which furnishes an escape for him from the woes of this life.

181 We have noted before that primitive peoples, when faced for a 177 time with a hopeless situation in this world, such as extinction, tend to seek and discover an escape by creating such a heaven. The Guarani sought a heaven in the West where there was no death and no persecution. More recently our own Indians on the reservations have turned to Peyoteism, which also supplies a heaven. In all these cases there is a renunciation of this world. The will to live is practically gone because there is no need to worry about maintaining life in this world, an impossible thing to do when in competition with civilization. But a heaven which cannot be touched by any civilized

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

181 177 invention offers a perfect refuge, even though it is only a philosophical one.

Mechanical aids to the shaman, in addition to his own psychological make-up, are: music and dance; tobacco, which he consumes in great quantities during his performance; tcuipah, a root with narcotic properties; caroto, which is a fermented or unfermented mixture of crushed maize and water, or manioc and water, and when obtainable, white rum. The extent to which these stimulants are used can be illustrated by the observations which are made in the course of one all-night performance: The shaman consumed 42 cigarettes which I offered him, about 100 cigars, which consisted of several strips of tobacco leaf wrapped in a thick green leaf obtained from one of the trees along the bank, about 6 inches of the tcuipah root, and about 2 quarts of the fermented maize-and-water mixture. Since these narcotics and stimulants were taken hurriedlly and in great quantities, it must have had a terrific physiological effect upon him. For instance, every cigarette and cigar was smoked completely through in 10 seconds. Each musical stanza lasted from about 10 to 15 seconds. He sang it first and then it was repeated by his people. It was during this repetition of his song that the shaman inhaled as much of the tobacco smoke as possible and then exhaled it just before commencing a new stanza.

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In contrast with the rather violent shamanistic performance of the male shaman, the women do not seem to depend very much on narcotics. During the day the men are not permitted to sing or whistle, but the women may lie in their hammocks and sing. They may take small quantities of all of these narcotics, but as far as my observation went I never saw any of them consume any great quantity.

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The spiritual world of the shaman is quite different from the everyday realistic world. A comparison of the carvings on the gourd rattles with the realistic carvings of the asabache made by anyone greatly demonstrates this. In the latter form of art expression, animals, birds, and scenes are copied with great accuracy and skill. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that if the shaman were to attempt the realistic representation of the spirit world he could do so, but he has chosen to portray the various gods and spirits almost symbolically. Kuma and Hatchawa were always represented holding up their hands. It is this position which is read into the western skies whenever at sunset there occurs a phenomenon described above. The rays of light emanating from the horizon represent the fingers of the hands of the gods.

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The form of the dance has been described. It starts off as a simple walk around a pole and it may become a fast run in the evening,

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1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

535 791 with the stamping of the right foot on the off-beat, but whenever the shaman is giving a really good performance his whole body responds to the dance and he may shake as violently as the rattle in his hand. His people may also throw themselves into a dance, making a series of jerky movements, bending from the waist downward and up again.

533 539 One of the typical songs of Kuma was a greeting to me. She said:

> Greetings, man, greetings. Your wife is waiting. She is not dead, nor is she sick, but she is thinking that her husband has been away so long that perhaps he is dead. She is good and loves her husband who is sick, which is good. But it is good that he is with me (Kuma speaking) and with my people. He is a good man. He gives me a cigar. I shall give him a horse when he is born again in my (Kuma) land. I shall give him much silver when he is born again in Kuma Land. I love him, the good man, and I shall love him in my land. In the other land, my land, he gave me drink like you my people. Like you my people, everyone will come to my land, the Yaruro land.

FEMALE SHAMANISM

791 767 554 776 It proved impossible to learn much about those things in which the women are chiefly or exclusively interested. The shamans seem to be as influential among both sexes as the men are, and they seem to acquire their power and prestige through dreams or revelations in the same way as the male shamans do. In the case of the women it seems that India Rosa must appear in a dream rather than Kuma. In the legends it is India Rosa who taught the women the various arts and crafts, so in shamanism she is the chief spiritual power. During the day, both Kuma and India Rosa are pictured as resting in their hammocks. Because of that the women shamans sing sitting in their hammocks, swaying back and forth, during the day. Apparently it is believed that by imitating the picture of Kuma and India Rosa they can reach the two spiritual forces more easily. These shamans never perform at night, although they will sing with the male shaman when the latter is giving a performance.

535 791 534 The gourd rattle seems to be an instrument which only the shamans can use with immunity and as a means of conversing with Kuma. The women do not have these rattles. Their singing is done unaccompanied by any musical instrument or by any dancing. Dancing is performed only at night, when it is led by the male shaman.

609 123 The nature of the visions experienced by the female shamans remained unknown to me. As has been mentioned before, social intercourse between man and woman, unless closely related by blood or marriage, is prohibited. It is a social taboo which apparently is never violated and which no amount of bribery could break down. It seemed best to respect this custom, even though it were at the expense of remaining ignorant of many phases of Yaruro culture practiced by the women. So, in the case of shamanism, although the

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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women sang to me and for me, I was not able to learn anything about their conceptions of the universe nor any other matter.

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On one occasion Landaeta, the shaman, invited Juan Bario's band to participate in a performance. The women prepared for it by painting the face with stamped designs—stamps smeared with oily stuff, stamped on the face, then the entire face, from eyebrows down, was covered with a thick coat of red ocher. It stuck where the grease was. The hair was worn in one braid down the back. They wore their best dresses.

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In anticipation of a long night, I lay down on the sands to rest, if possible. However, the skies interested the Yaruros. Landaeta and his people lay beside me to talk about the heavens. From that we passed to a discussion of Hatchawa, who, according to Landaeta, had said that I was well known to him and a good friend. In order to test the shaman I told him that I was anxious about my family whom I had left so long ago, and I asked him to find out about my wife, son, and general family from Hatchawa, which he promised to do. The conversation went back to the stars, and as the big dipper began to rise over the northern horizon Landaeta disappeared in the darkness. Soft conversation continued, and then came Juan Bario and his family to join us.

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A few words of warm friendship with Juan Bario and we went to joint Landaeta, who was sitting ready to begin. Landaeta had withdrawn to the west of the camp, and put on his shamanistic breechclout and head-cloth, which consisted of a sort of headkerchief. His son Brigido sat behind him; to the right of Landaeta sat Brigida, his wife, and next to her, her sister. Juan Bario and I sat back a little.

Unlike our own religious ceremonies, there was no attempt at artificial seriousness. The children played about noisily, without reproof, under the very nose of the shaman, some of the men jested and laughed, others conversed more quietly, etc. In other words, the imminent communion with the gods was an event of festive proportions, and no restraints were placed on the normal and natural behavior.

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Landaeta began to sing and he was accompanied by a few of the attendants. In the meanwhile small fires had appeared here and there, and at these were lighted the long green leaf-covered cigars. None smoked an entire cigar, following the general custom of sharing with the other fellow. The songs at first were accompanied with faint rattling of the macaua, but this became stronger and stronger as the shaman approached the Land of Kuma. Finally at midnight—almost on the stroke—the shaman announced in his song that he had reached the desired land. The singing became more intense, faster, and everyone seemed to take more interest.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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787 shaman eventually returned to us, being fed and greeted with affection by all.

The singing stopped at 6 o'clock. A number of rather remarkable facts are to be emphasized.

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796 1. By actual count the shaman sang no less than 3,000 musical phrases and verses and about 800 stanzas without any breaks or rest, ever changing the words, and subject matter, and jumping from one thing to another at a very fast tempo. How the shaman could make up his verses so quickly, while the people repeated the previous verse, is not easy to understand.

2. He shook the rattle without ceasing a moment, with the same sidewise motion of the hand, most violently for nine and a half hours.

[516] 3. He sat in the same posture—left leg doubled under him, right leg in cross-leg position, for the entire time. Not once did he move.

[276] 4. He smoked the long cigars with the thick leaves without taking them out of his mouth, producing so much smoke that I choked and my eyes smarted from it. He must have smoked at least 75 of them, and probably over a hundred. He smoked 35 cigarettes, in addition, in the same way.

[273] 5. He drank about 2 gallons of unfermented crushed maize in water.

The music was spirited and had a swing with the emphasis on the off beat that is as effective, if not more so, than the negro spiritual.

After the all-night singing there was a lull in the morning, everyone snatching a wink of sleep, but by the time I had finished writing and medicating my foot the men crowded around to tell me of the night's experiences. At noon the women started singing, sitting in their hammocks, and they kept this up until late in the day. They were singing mostly about me. I noticed that their songs seemed to be of a simpler sort and more monotonous than those of the men, generally consisting of one verse repeated over and over again to form the [198] stanza. They sang in the women's language.

JUAN BARIO ON THE EVENTS OF THE NIGHT

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787
776 Panemé Tsió brought a horse for the shaman to go to Kuma's house. Panemé Tsió is represented as a sort of "boss" of the figurines found in the sands. Then came the father of Fernando. He said that they should live well here and warned him not to mistreat his wife (talking to son-in-law). Then came the father of Brigida. He said that the new wife of his grandson should treat her husband well and vice versa. Then came a brother of Brigida. He said that he is wealthy in Kuma's land, possessing cattle and horses. Then came the mother of Brigida. She counseled her grandchild not to

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

787 Then came the father of Juan Bario on horseback. He said:

115 "I greet you. I am waiting for you. Your land is poor now but Kuma's land
[539] is good and rich. When you die you will be born in Kuma's land. I was living here with you, I died here, but I was alone in Kuma's land where I am wealthy. See, you are poor. I was the same way. It is different in Kuma's land. There is much cattle and horses. Live well with your wife. Treat her well. Kuma does not want you to do otherwise."

533 Then the shaman returned on horseback.

There is great reluctance on the part of the shaman to sing unless there is a strong reason for it. During my stay with the Yaruros many occasions presented themselves to justify the holding of shamanistic performances.

796 On one occasion I returned to camp after an absence of two days.
●791 This was enough. I arrived at their camp about 7.30 in the evening. Landaeta greeted me affectionately and then told me that he and his people considered me a member of the family. The women came to put their arms about me in greeting. Landaeta in one of his mystical moods talked of the beauty of the small fire with turtle roasting; of the sands glistening in the moonlight; the araguato monkeys which were roaring in the distance; the occasional birds that sang in the night; the toninos came up to blow and splash in the river. All of this fitted in with the soft murmur of women speaking, and laughing in the darkness. An occasional misfortune, such as dropping a sackful of stuff, brought merry laughter on everybody's part. The crunching
276] of the sand gave notice that the women were digging deep to reach moist sand in which to bury the leaves to be used as cigar covers. Soon all of us, men, women, and children, were smoking.

The rest of Landaeta's people arrived in canoes. They sat on the sand with us. Landaeta talked with them at length. At a point he arose. His wife handed him some objects. He walked away to the west, immediately followed by one of his sons and a young nephew. He returned after a while, minus his trousers, wearing the shaman's breechclout and cap.

He went to sit alone at the bottom of the sand bank. After some time his wife gave him a cigar. He continued to sit alone and silent. At a sign his son and nephew took a slender pole and planted it in the sand. They retired. Men and women continued talking. After some time Landaeta rose, stood before the pole, smoking, facing it and the east. Several stars began to rise.
796 He stood in front of the pole for some time. Then he weakly began
791 to sing. After two songs his wife came to plant a shorter pole to the
533 west of the long one, and hung from it a basket. Landaeta continued standing still and singing, pausing briefly between songs. His son went to stand behind him, his nephew at the left side of the

1: Petrullo E-5 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

796 791 533 son. They began to take up the songs—shaman sang one phrase, repeated it, sang at low pitch and repeated. Last repetition joined in by assistants (attendants) and then the four phrases would be repeated, the shaman remaining quiet, but immediately singing a new phrase when they had hardly finished it. A few women joined in a line side by side to the south of the shaman. Singing without a rattle and without dancing continued for about an hour. Then 796 one of the women went to the basket and brought the shaman the 791 rattle. Singing continued. The only motion was a slow bending 535 forward and bending of the knees by the women in unison—that is, rhythmically on the off beat. A few of the men did the same. Shaman would shake his rattle at times. At the end of one song he said "amen" and the women walked away to the west. When he began a new song they returned. His wife from time to time brought the shaman a cigar from the basket. A fire was started to the west of the pole and the women clustered around. The shaking of the rattle became more frequent and more energetic, and in the middle of one song the women and all began dancing. Women put right hand on left shoulder of one in front and walked anticlockwise around the pole. An inner circle was formed by the men walking one behind the other. Animation was slight, but the right foot was stamped on the off beat. After going around a few times they would stop in original position to finish the song.

This dance was varied a little later on.

In the course of the evening, the singing and dancing became more and more animated until the shaman was in a frenzy. High-pitched voice, faster rhythm, greater accentuation, more feeling. Shaking of rattle became more frequent, rhythm became faster. Shaman no longer stood still, but danced at first by a jerky movement for ward, bending the knees, then moving about, half spinning, and near the end his body seemed to quiver jerkingly and rhythmically. The women's motions became more and more accentuated and near the end men and women bent low at the waist, moving body up and down, bending legs at the knees. The walk around the pole became a fast run, with a hopping step on the right foot in unison. In this way—the men would leap high—a resonating beat was produced, accentuating the liquid rich rattle of the gourd and the choral singing.

This continued until 4 in the morning, becoming more and more frenzied, until the morning star appeared.

I regret that I fell asleep near the end. When I awoke at sunrise everyone was asleep, apparently completely exhausted.

535 They started facing northeast in front of the pole, the women to the right of the shaman. When standing still the women, with arms

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

in small pieces on the banks of the Capanaparo. It is about as hard to work as coal. It has much the same appearance. The carving tool is the ordinary knife which, in some cases, may be a broken matchete. Yet, with such crude implements, they are able to produce exquisite realistic carvings of birds, fish, and other animals. These are generally perforated and strung into a necklace. Each woman possesses at least a few of these carved figures, the number depending on the industry of her husband. No symbolical significance seems to be attached to either the painting, the carving, or to any of the designs appearing on the stamps. There may be some magical meaning to them, but all inquiries were answered in the negative.

The gourd rattles present an entirely different manifestation. In the first place, only the male shaman can use a rattle. It is, in fact, the badge of shamanism. All the designs appearing on the rattle represent what he sees during his visits to Kuma's land. These carvings are made with the point of any sharp instrument, which cuts in just deep enough to expose the lighter colored inner wood of the rattle.

To become a shaman one must dream of Kuma and the other gods, and show his people that he can communicate with the godheads when occasion demands. Perhaps looking at shamanistic practices objectively this may mean primarily that the would-be shaman has a fertile imagination and some artistic talent. I do not think that we ought to doubt that he believes that he actually sees and talks with Kuma, Itciai, and the rest of the spirit world.

He commemorates his dreams on the sacred rattle, carving out on its surface the figures which appear in his dreams. Kuma and Hatchawa dominate the decorations on the gourd rattles, and since those collected came from the Puaná moiety, Puaná is also portrayed. In plate 24 various views of one of these gourd rattles are shown. The large geometric figure dominating the first drawing represents Kuma; the smaller one Hatchawa. Rotating the rattle toward the left we discover Puaná, the Snake.

In connection with these rattles one of the most interesting aesthetic features is the filling in of space. All of the specimens collected and shown in figures 25, 26, and 27 demonstrate this. In watching Landaeta at work I asked him why he did so; his reply was that a properly decorated rattle must be "tsaimui", that is "good", "proper", "beautiful."

Music

One would suspect that the Yaruros would have borrowed some of the musical instruments employed by the Llaneros. Among the lat-

1 [See category 116, end p[ar]t 14 --- Analyst]
2 [See category 116, pp. 242-243 --- Analyst]

1: Perrullo E-8 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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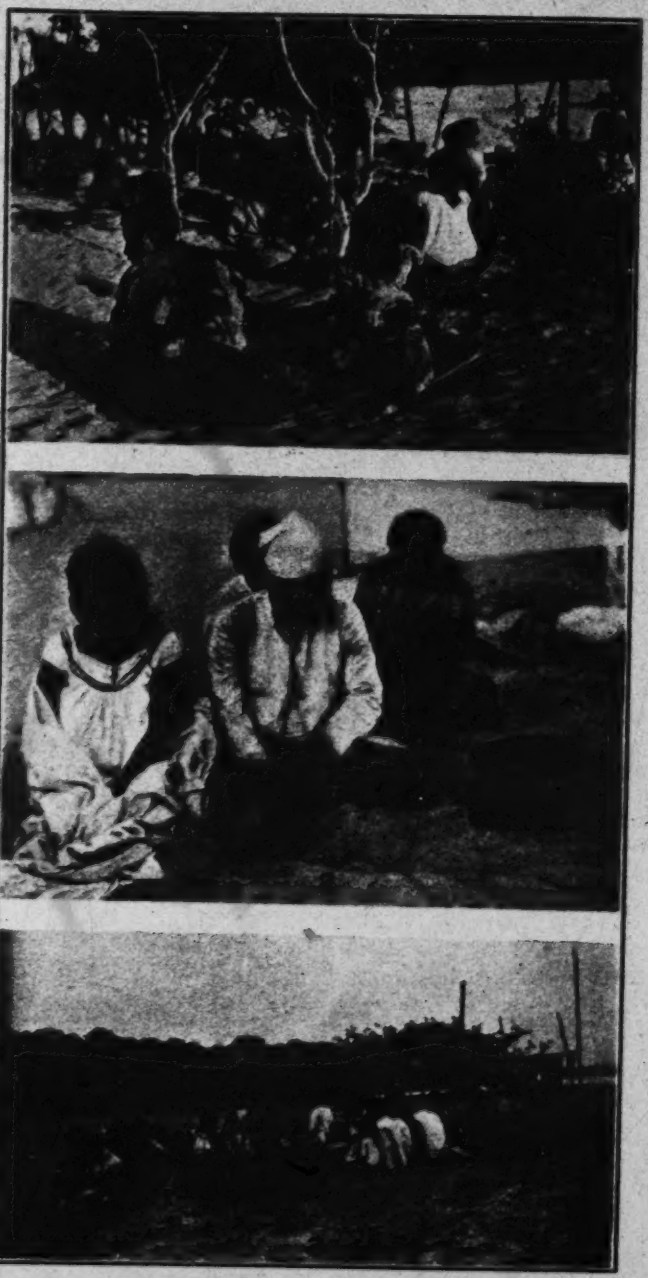

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1. Clothes to the Yaruros mean protection from the cold at night and a mark of being "civilized." It is not often that they are able to secure new cloth. Generally they fall heir to cast-off garments. 2. At the end of a 9-hour performance during which he smoked countless cigars, drank "corozo," and ate tsiupah, a narcotic, Landaeta, the shaman of the Capanaparo Yaruros, waits quietly for the sun to rise. His wife, who attended him all night, is seated at his right. 3. Landaeta, wearing a head cloth, with his people seated around him before sunrise. The women are at the left, the men at the right of the picture.

(End Plate 5)

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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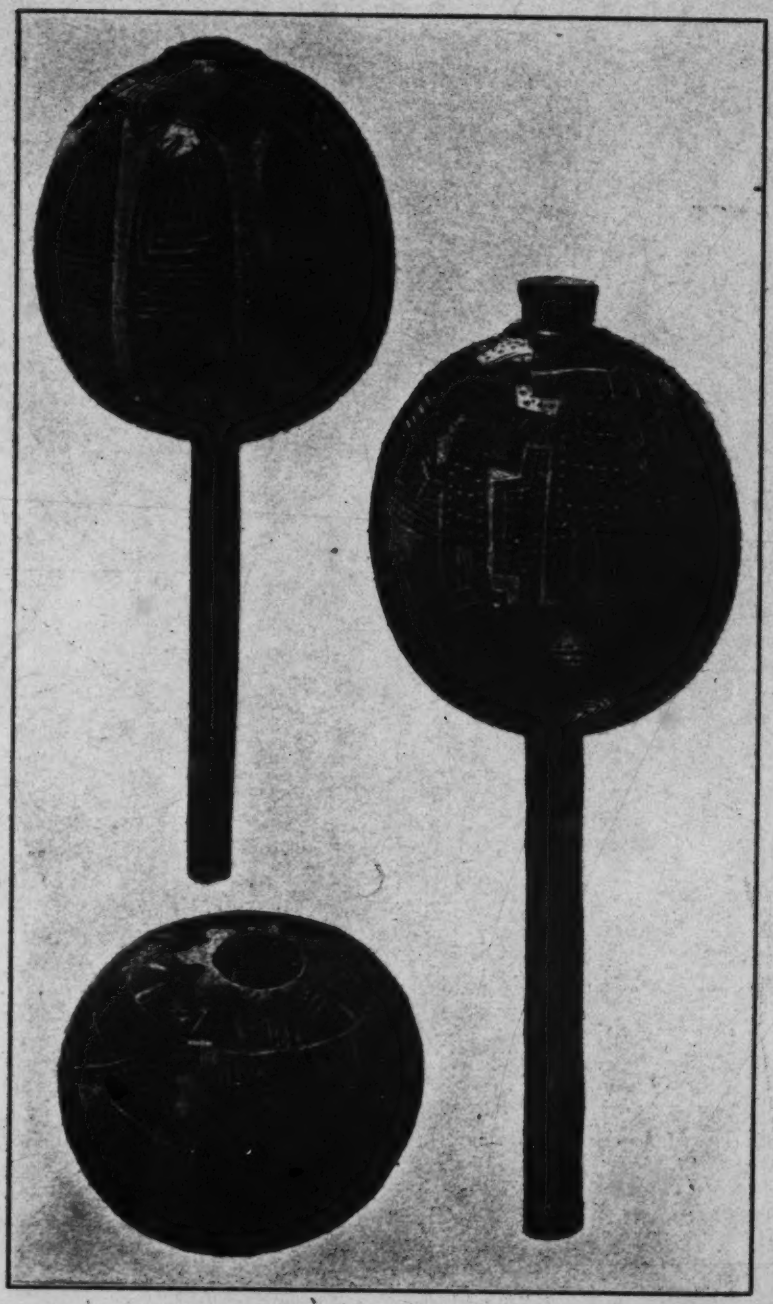

Shaman's rattles. Only the male shamans use gourd rattles. They are always decorated with etched representations of mythological figures which the shaman "sees" during his trances and dreams.

(End Plate 19)